

began work immediately after the bill was approved by the President, or even a month earlier, the field office spent between eight and twelve weeks preparing the report. It has now been nine weeks since it was sent to Headquarters for approval, and we still have no idea when the Corps will finally issue it. Should a document take longer to be approved than it did to be drafted? Apparently, if it is to be approved by the Corps, it does. But it shouldn't.

Why is this document important? Countless residents of the rural Pacific Northwest rely on the benefits that the Columbia and Snake River dams provide to our region and our nation. If the Corps of Engineers is to study the drawdown of a major multi-purpose federal project like the John Day Dam, it is imperative that its plans be subjected to an open review by those of us sent back here to Washington, DC to represent these communities. Without the formal views of the Corps, these communities are left with excessive and inexcusable uncertainty over the future of their livelihoods.

Mr. President, I will continue to wait for the Corps to provide a report. I do not intend to wait patiently.

While I am on the topic of waiting, I will address a second issue. The communities in the Tri-City area of Washington state have been waiting since 1996 for the Corps of Engineers to complete a legally required transfer of riverfront land to local governments. The Corps has claimed that it does not have the funds to begin the process, and although it has recently begun working with the local communities to come to a resolution, it still claims it cannot complete the process without an additional appropriation from this Congress. Along similar lines, the Corps claims that it cannot come up with approximately \$60,000 to manage the Wallula, Stateline and Juniper Canyon wildlife habitats, and must lease the management of this important, pristine land to the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation. This transfer of land management has raised many serious questions in the minds of a number of my Tri-City constituents, who have yet to receive a comforting answer.

Taken on their own, these incidents might not seem odd. The very same office of the Corps that claims poverty in these latter two cases, however, sees fit to spend freely in other areas. Mr. President, I am sure you are aware of Kennewick Man. Kennewick Man's remains were discovered in July, 1996, on the shore of the Columbia River, near Kennewick, Washington. Using carbon dating techniques, scientist have determined Kennewick Man's remains to be more than 9,000 years old, by far the oldest human remains ever found in North America. This represents a major breakthrough for the study of ancient peoples in North America.

Mr. President, what would be the logical thing to do with the land on which

Kennewick Man was discovered? Should we study it further, or cover it with boulders? Some of our nation's most esteemed anthropologists and archaeologists have answered—as I am sure you or I would—that we should allow the site to be studied further, in the hope that we can learn even more about early North American inhabitants. But that is not the way the Corps sees it. If the Corps has its way, it will helicopter tons of “rip-rap”—large stones—to the river and use them to cover the site, after which it will plant numerous willow trees, completely covering, and possibly destroying, important geological and archaeological evidence. Scientists studying the site claim that this will erect an “impenetrable barrier” to future research.

How much will it cost to cover this important site? The Corps has not disclosed its estimate, but I have been told by people in the local community that it is likely to cost at least \$100,000, and perhaps as much as \$250,000. In addition, the Corps claims, that should scientists want to study the site in the future, the boulders and trees can be removed—at a cost of course. How much? Another \$100,000. Even then the boulders are likely to have crushed any remaining archaeological objects and possibly changed the chemical makeup of the soil, rendering future tests worthless.

Mr. President, if the Corps of Engineers cannot come up with \$60,000 to manage important wildlife habitats, and cannot put together enough money to begin satisfying its legal requirement to transfer land to local authorities, how can it possibly justify spending upwards of a quarter-million dollars, which the Congress never appropriated, to cover a potential gold mine of archaeological information with boulders and trees? Of course it cannot. In fact, it has not even attempted to do so. The Corps spokesman in Walla Walla has refused to answer specific questions about the pending contract to cover the Kennewick Man site. If this bureaucracy has its way, it will ignore the concerns of the residents of its district, lease important and pristine land to an outside group to manage, and then apparently use that money to cover a site to which countless members of the scientific community have requested access. This is nothing short of unbelievable.

Mr. President, The Corps of Engineers has a lot of explaining to do. It owes answers to Congress and it owes answers to the people of the Tri-Cities. I sincerely hope it will be more forthcoming in the near future than it has been in the recent past. If not, I anxiously await an opportunity to question the Corps of Engineers during this year's appropriation process.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—VETO MESSAGE ON H.R. 2631, CANCELLATION DISAPPROVAL ACT

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, on behalf of the leadership, I ask unanimous consent at 5:50 p.m. this evening the Senate lay aside the pending business in order to resume the veto message to accompany the military construction appropriations bill and that there be 10 minutes remaining for debate to be equally divided between Senator STEVENS and Senator BYRD. I further ask that the vote occur at 6 o'clock p.m. on the question: “Shall the bill pass, the objections of the President to the contrary notwithstanding?”

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—AMENDMENT NO. 1647

Mr. GORTON. I ask unanimous consent that at 2 p.m. today the Senate resume consideration of the pending SNOWE amendment and that there be 3 hours and 50 minutes equally divided in the usual form prior to a motion to table, with the vote occurring on the motion to table immediately following the scheduled 6 o'clock p.m. vote with respect to the veto message.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GORTON. For the information of all Senators, the Senate will next vote back to back at 6 o'clock p.m. this evening.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, what is the current order?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has 10 minutes under his leader time and 5 minutes under morning business.

Mr. DASCHLE. I thank the Chair. I will use that time for some remarks this morning.

GENERAL LEE BUTLER

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I want to take a moment to raise one of the most critical issues facing this nation today, nuclear weapons security, and to call the Senate's attention to one of the most intelligent and courageous people involved in the debate surrounding this issue, General Lee Butler.

At a National Press Club appearance earlier this month, General Butler delivered an eloquent address entitled, “The Risks Of Nuclear Deterrence: From Superpowers To Rogue Leaders.” His major conclusion was that, “. . . as a nation we have no greater responsibility than to bring the nuclear era